A HUMBLE, SEASONABLE, AND Neceſſar CAUTION.

WHAT pity is it, that *Abraham* and *Lot* ſhould fall out, that Two *Iſraelites* ſhould be at Strif amidſt the *Egyptians*: That *John's* Diſciples ſhould join with *Phariſees* againſt JESUS. That *Corinthians* (for their Contentions) ſhould be Carnal and walk as Men. That ever theſe Two Famous Witneſſes *Luther* and *Calvin* ſhould have been at ſuch Feuds? Still *Satan* is thus busy, and Chriſtians are thus Malicious; that (as if they wanted Enemies) they flee in one anothers Faces, *ubi, & vincere Inglorium eſt, & Alteri ſordidum.* There was no noiſe in ſetting up the Temple; In *Lebanon* there was, but not in *Sion*: What ever Tumults there are Abroad, 'tis fit and ſafe there ſhould be all Quiet and Concord in the Church. It were happy ſurely, if now, as of old, the Multitude of Believers (Miniſters and People) were ἡ καρδία, καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μία of one Heart and of one Soul; And, as in an Ancient Greek Copy, it is added, That there was not one Controverſy or Contention amongſt them. It is not to be doubted, but that *Joſeph's* weighty Counſel to his Brethren, is your ſerious Advice to one another, and we hope, that every Man of you will take it to himſelf, *Gen.* 45. 24. *See that ye fall not out by the Way:* Such a Charge layeth your great LORD and Maſter CHRIST upon all his Diſciples, to *Love* one another, and to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. *Si Collidimur, frangimur, & merito.* If we Claſh, we are Broken, and deſervedly, according to the old Fable of the Two Earthen Pots ſweeming in the Sea. The Daughter of *Diviſion* is *Diſſolution*, ſaid *Nazianzen*; And every Subdiviſion in point of Religion, is a ſtrong Wapon in the Hand of the contrar Party, as one wiſely obſerved. *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, if they appear not together, it preſageth a Storm. Till *Lot* was departed, and the Strife ſeaſed, God appeared not unto *Abraham*. *Gen.* 13. 14. *He is the God of Peace and hates Contention.* They ſay of Bees, that Stir and Strife amongſt them, is a ſign their King is about to Remove, to leave the Hive, and be gone ſome where elſe. God refuſeth to be ſerved, till the Matter be Agreed. *Mat.* 5. 24. *Verbum Sapienti*, to both *Juror* and *Non-juror*. We have an equal Reſpect and Veneration for both, becauſe of Learned Men, Wiſe Men, and Pious Men in both ſides; So that We the Short-lighted Laiks dare not take it upon us, to Judge or Determine, *Which is Which, Who is Right, and who Wrong*; Who are in their Duty (particularly as to this Matter) and who not; And it were to be wiſhed, We impertinetly meddled leſs that way: But we are afraid, it may be ſaid in General, That both Parties ſeems to Reſemble *Job* and his Friends (Good Men all) That a Jealous GOD has too much ground to Accuſe and Cheek both, and to take both to task; And do humbly think, it is neither Seaſon nor Duty, eſpecially now in ſuch a Critical Juncture, Tenaciouſly to ſtand it out againſt his Brother, and to keep up his own particular Opinion, which we are bold to ſay, is too often meerly upon the points of Airy Honour, and vain Reputation, (a Crime not to be once named amongſt the Miniſters of Chriſt) only that he may not ſeem to bewray ſo much weakneſs and ſillineſs as to Retract from any thing of what he has once advanced as his Opinion, leſt he ſhould be Reputed to be Wavering, Unſtable and Fickle; While in the mean time, it were truely more Noble, more Brave, and more Chriſtian, Lovingly and Affectionately to meet one another as far as the Word of GOD, and a well Informed Conſcience (ſuffering it ſelf to be Informed) will

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allow. This we judge to be the *magis Bonum Eccleſiæ*; And till then, to be by all means poſſible knit together, and to one another in Heart and Affection, and with all Meekneſs, Reſolution and Conſtancy to carry on, and jointly Promote the Great and Common Work of the Goſpel; And to ſhun and dread every thing, whether by Writing, Preaching, Praying, Printing or Pratting, which may have the leaſt Tendency or Innuendo of Dividing among themſelves, ſeparating Paſtor from Paſtor, Paſtors from their Flocks, or Flocks from their Paſtors; And this upon their Perril, as they would deſire timeouſly to prevent a ſudden Stroke both upon themſelves, upon their People, and upon the Bleeding Church of *Scotland*: For whoever he be that will needs play the Buſſy-body in ſowing *Diſcord* among Brethren, may find it to his coſt, when perhaps too late, That he has been Acting the part of a *Jacobite* and *Papiſt*; or, if you will, the Devils part; Chuſe you which. And what if the Great GOD ſhall one day throw that in his diſh, as the returning Prophet ſaid in another caſe, *Zech.* 13. 6. Behold! *Theſe are the Scars and Wounds which I received in the Houſe of my Friends.* This will be ſour ſauce to their ſweeteſt Comforts!

There has been too many wrong and bold Touches given to the Ark of GOD already from without doors, by the Implacable Enemies of our Reformation. We would gladly hope that none within our own Boſome, in any Church Judicatory will have the leaſt Art or Part herein, Directly nor Indirectly. It has been the Beauty, Glory and Safety of the Church of *Scotland*, that its Miniſters has been hitherto wonderfully knit and kept together in a Holy Harmony and Harmleſs Unity amongſt themſelves, ever ſince the late Glorious and Happy *Revolution*, whatever ſmall differences of opinion there may now and then ariſe amongſt them, and this in ſpite of Satan and his Inſtruments, who are ſtill waiting for their halting, and throwing in the other Fire-ball to Divide and Ruine them; And we Pray that *Sions* GOD may in Mercy continue ſtill to Bleſs us with that Good and Pleaſant thing to ſee *Brethren* Dwelling together in *Unity*, to the Confounding Diſappointment of all their Deſperate and Blood-thirſty Enemies, and to the Unſpeakable Comfort of all the Well-wiſhers of our Legal Eſtabliſh'd Church. *Amen.*

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